

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A plural element paint shield for temporarily protectively covering a lens of a light fixture comprising a plurality of paint shield elements each of which is configured to protectively cover a separate portion of the front face of the lens when in an installed position wherein the paint shield elements extend in adjacent side by side relationship to substantially contiguously cover the front face of the lens, with adjacent ones of the paint shield elements having portions configured to overlap when the paint shield elements are in the installed position, with each of the paint shield elements having edge portions configured to extend between the frame and the perimeter portions of the front face of the lens when in the installed position, and with each of the paint shield elements being formed from relatively thin, relatively stiff material that is pliable enough to permit central portions thereof to flex away from the front face of the lens as may be needed to permit the edge portions to be inserted between the frame and the perimeter portions of the front face of the lens.

2. The plural element paint shield of Claim 1 wherein a first one of the plurality of paint shield elements is configured to cover one end region but not an opposite end region of the front face of the lens when in the installed position, and wherein a second one of the paint shield elements is configured to cover the opposite end region but not the one end region of the front face of the lens when in the installed position.

3. The plural element paint shield of Claim 2 wherein the first one of the paint shield elements and the second one of the paint shield elements are sufficiently thin to permit their being initially installed one atop the other with the edge portions thereof overlying each other and extending between the frame lip and the perimetrically extending edge portions of the lens, whereafter the first one of the paint shield elements and the second one of the paint shield elements may be moved in opposite directions toward the one end region and the opposite end region, respectively, to bring the paint shield elements to the installed position.

4. The plural element paint shield of Claim 1 wherein a foldable portion of at least a selected one of the paint shield elements is connected to other portions thereof by a fold line that permits the foldable portion to be deflected out of a plane occupied by said other portions thereof so as to strengthen the paint shield against deflection under the influence of the force to gravity.

5. The plural element paint shield of Claim 1 wherein all of the paint shield elements are of substantially equal size and are substantially identically configured.

6. The plural element paint shield of Claim 1 wherein the plurality of paint shield elements consists of a first paint shield element and a second paint shield element that are substantially identical, and each has a size that is slightly greater than half of the size of the front face of the lens.

7. The plural element paint shield of Claim 1 wherein at least one of the paint shield elements is

formed primarily from thin, relatively stiff stock selected from a group of materials that includes cardboard, fiberboard, chipboard and plastic.

8. The plural element paint shield of Claim 1 wherein at least one of the paint shield elements is formed primarily from material that permits light from a light fixture on which the paint shield is installed to pass therethrough.

9. The plural element paint shield of Claim 1 wherein at least one of the paint shield elements has a central region formed primarily from material that permits light from a light fixture on which the paint shield is installed to pass therethrough.

10. The plural element paint shield of Claim 1 wherein at least one of the paint shield elements has a central region formed from material that permits light from a light fixture on which the paint shield is installed to pass therethrough, and a perimeter region that surrounds the central region formed from thin, relatively stiff stock selected from a group of materials that includes cardboard, fiberboard, chipboard, substantially transparent plastic, substantially translucent plastic and substantially opaque plastic.

11. The plural element paint shield of Claim 10 wherein the material that permits light to pass therethrough is thin stock selected from a group of materials that includes materials that are transparent and materials that are translucent.

12. The plural element paint shield of Claim 1 wherein all of the paint shield elements are comprised of

thin material that, when in the installed position, closely overlies so as to extend substantially flatly alongside the front face of the lens of the light fixture, except that at least one of the paint shield elements has at least one portion that can be oriented to extend away from the front face of the lens so as to strengthen the paint shield to inhibit deflection of central portions of the paint shield under the influence of the force of gravity.

13. The plural element paint shield of Claim 1 wherein at least one of the paint shield elements carries a visual indicator to guide trimming of edge portions thereof when there is a need to cut away said edge portions to permit the paint shield to be used with light fixture lenses that have at least one dimension that differs from said first and second dimensions.

14. The plural element paint shield of Claim 1 wherein at least a selected portion of the perimeter of at least one of the paint shield elements is provided with a plurality of visible guide formations extending therealong to guide cutting of said one of the paint shield elements to a size that will permit said at least one of the paint shield elements to properly cover front face portions of the lenses of light fixtures of a variety of sizes.

15. The plural element paint shield of Claim 14 wherein the visible guide formations are defined by a series of spaced-apart perforations that extend at least part-way through the material of said at least one of the paint shield elements.

16. The plural element paint shield of Claim 14 wherein the visible guide formations are defined by scored

lines of weakness formed in the material of said at least one of the paint shield elements.

17. A paint shield for protectively covering a lens of a light fixture of the type having a frame that extends perimetrically about and overlies perimeter portions of a front face of the lens, comprising a first paint shield element configured to cover one end region but not an opposite end region of the front face of the lens of the light fixture, a second paint shield element configured to cover the opposite end region but not the one end region of the front face of the lens of the light fixture, with the first and second paint shield elements being formed from relatively thin, relatively stiff material that is pliable enough to permit the first and second paint shield elements to have central portions thereof deflected away from the front face of the lens so that opposite side portions thereof can be inserted between opposite sides of the front face of the lens and opposite sides of the frame to bring the first and second elements into an initial overlapped relationship wherein the elements cover neither of the one and opposite end regions of the lens, whereafter the first paint shield element may be slided toward the one end region, and the second paint shield element may be slided in an opposite direction toward the opposite end region to installed positions of the first and second paint shield elements wherein the first paint shield element covers the one end region of the front face of the lens, wherein the second paint shield element covers the opposite end region of the front face of the lens, and wherein overlapping portions of the first and second paint shield elements cover a central region of the front face of the lens to prevent paint from being applied to the lens during painting of a front face of the frame.

18. The paint shield of Claim 17 wherein the relatively thin, relatively stiff material that forms at least one of the first and second paint shield elements is connected by a line of weakness of the material to a portion of the material that can be folded down to project away from the front face of the lens of the light fixture so as to stiffen said at least one of the first and second paint shield elements.

19. The paint shield of Claim 18 wherein the line of weakness is formed by linearly scoring the relatively thin, relatively stiff material to define a fold line along which the relatively thin, relatively stiff material can be folded.

20. The paint shield of Claim 18 wherein the line of weakness is formed by providing spaced perforations that extend linearly to define a fold line along which the relatively thin, relatively stiff material can be folded.

21. The paint shield of Claim 17 wherein selected portions of the perimeters of the first and second paint shield elements are provided with visible guide formations that extend therealong to guide one in cutting the first and second paint shield elements down to sizes that will permit the first and second paint shield elements to properly cover the front faces of the lenses of light fixtures of a variety of sizes.

22. The paint shield of Claim 21 wherein the guide formations are defined by scored lines of weakness.

23. The paint shield of Claim 22 wherein the guide formations are defined by spaced perforations that

at least partially cut through the material of the paint shield elements to assist with the trimming of the first and second paint shield elements to the size of a particular light fixture lens.

24. A self-supporting, easy-to-install and easy-to-remove paint shield for covering a generally rectangular lens of a ceiling-mounted light fixture of the type having a frame lip that underlies perimetrically extending edge portions of the generally rectangular lens, wherein the generally rectangular lens has a first pair of substantially parallel extending opposed edges separated by a first dimension that defines a length of the generally rectangular lens, and has a second pair of substantially parallel extending opposed edges separated by a second dimension that defines a width of the generally rectangular lens, wherein the paint shield is comprised of a plurality of relatively thin, relatively stiff paint shield elements that are configured so that adjacent ones of the paint shield elements have portions that overlap slightly when the paint shield elements are installed to closely underlie and to substantially fully cover a front face of the generally rectangular lens, with the installed paint shield elements having edge portions that extend between the frame lip and the perimetrically extending edge portions of the lens so as to overlie the frame lip and to underlie the perimetrically extending edge portions of the lens, with each of the paint shield elements being of a size that is less than the size of the front face of the generally rectangular lens, and with each of the paint shield elements having a pair of substantially parallel extending opposed edge surfaces that are spaced apart by a distance that substantially equals a selected one of said first and second dimensions.

25. The paint shield of Claim 24 wherein the paint shield elements are all of substantially equal size and are substantially identically configured.

26. The paint shield of Claim 25 wherein the plurality of paint shield elements consists of a first paint shield element and a second paint shield element that are substantially identical, and each has a size that is slightly greater than half of the size of the front face of the lens.

27. The paint shield of Claim 24 wherein at least one of the paint shield elements is formed primarily from thin, relatively stiff stock selected from a group of materials that includes cardboard, fiberboard, chipboard, substantially opaque plastic, substantially transparent plastic, and substantially translucent plastic.

28. The paint shield of Claim 24 wherein at least one of the paint shield elements is formed primarily from material that permits light from a light fixture on which the paint shield is installed to pass therethrough.

29. The paint shield of Claim 24 wherein at least one of the paint shield elements has a central region formed primarily from material that permits light from a light fixture on which the paint shield is installed to pass therethrough.

30. The paint shield of Claim 24 wherein at least one of the paint shield elements has a central region formed from material that permits light from a light fixture on which the paint shield is installed to pass therethrough, and a perimeter region that surrounds the central region formed from thin, relatively stiff stock

selected from a group of materials that includes cardboard, fiberboard, chipboard, substantially transparent plastic, substantially translucent plastic and substantially opaque plastic.

31. The paint shield of Claim 30 wherein the material that permits light to pass therethrough is thin stock selected from a group of materials that includes materials that are transparent and materials that are translucent.

32. The paint shield of Claim 24 wherein the plurality of paint shield elements, when installed to protectively cover the front face of a light fixture lens, are comprised of thin material that closely overlies so as to extend substantially flatly alongside the front face of the lens of the light fixture, except that at least one of the paint shield elements has at least one portion that can be oriented to extend away from the front face of the lens so as to strengthen the paint shield to inhibit deflection of central portions of the paint shield under the influence of the force of gravity.

33. The paint shield of Claim 24 wherein at least one of the paint shield elements carries a visual indicator to guide trimming of edge portions of the paint shield when there is a need to cut away said edge portions so to permit the paint shield to be used with light fixture lenses that have at least one dimension that differs from said first and second dimensions.

34. The paint shield of Claim 24 wherein selected portions of the perimeter of at least one of the paint shield elements are provided with visible guide formations that extend therealong to guide one in cutting said one of

the paint shield elements to a size that will permit said at least one of the paint shield elements to properly cover front face portions of the lenses of light fixtures of a variety of sizes.

35. The paint shield of Claim 34 wherein the visible guide formations are defined by a series of spaced-apart perforations that extend at least part-way through the material of said at least one of the paint shield elements.

36. The paint shield of Claim 34 wherein the visible guide formations are defined by scored lines of weakness.

37. The paint shield of Claim 24 wherein at least one of the paint shield elements has a fold-down portion that can be oriented to extend away from the lens of a light fixture to strengthen the paint shield when installed on said light fixture against deflection under the influence of the force of gravity.

38. The paint shield of Claim 37 wherein the fold-down portion is connected to other portions of the at least one of the paint shield elements by a fold line that is visibly marked by press-formed scoring that diminishes the thickness of the material of the at least one of the paint shield elements along said fold line.

39. The paint shield of Claim 37 wherein the fold-down portion is connected to other portions of the at least one of the paint shield elements by a fold line that is visibly marked by a series of perforations that extend along the fold line.

40. A paint shield for temporarily protectively covering a generally rectangular lens of a ceiling mounted light fixture to shield the lens from having paint applied thereto when paint is being applied within the vicinity of the light fixture, wherein the generally rectangular lens has a width dimension and a length dimension, and wherein the fixture has a frame lip that extends about and underlies peripheral edge portions of the lens, comprising a plurality of paint shield elements configured to be positioned side by side in an array that forms a rectangular cover having length and width dimensions that substantially equal the length and width dimensions of the lens, and wherein the array of paint shield elements has peripheral edge portions configured to be inserted between the frame lip and the peripheral edge portions of the lens to support the elements in positions that closely underlie the lens when the array of paint shield elements is installed to protectively cover the lens.

41. The paint shield of Claim 40 wherein the generally rectangular array of paint shield elements has a pair of opposite sides separated by a distance that substantially equals a selected one of the length and width dimensions of the lens, and wherein at least one of the paint shield elements bridges said distance so as to extend transversely across the lens of the fixture between the opposite sides of the fixture.

42. The paint shield of Claim 41 wherein all of the paint shield elements bridge said distance between the opposite sides.

43. The paint shield of Claim 42 wherein one of the paint shield elements is provided with a stiffening

formation that extends transversely across at least a selected portion of the one of the paint shield elements.

44. The paint shield of Claim 40 wherein the plurality of paint shield elements consists of a first paint shield element configured to protectively cover one end region of the lens of the fixture, and a second paint shield element configured to protectively cover an opposite end region of the lens of the fixture, with the first and second paint shield elements being configured to partially overlap to cover a central region of the lens of the fixture.

45. The paint shield of Claim 42 wherein the first and second paint shield elements are substantially identical, with each being formed from relatively thin, relatively stiff material, and each has a stiffening formation that extends transversely across at least selected portions thereof.

46. The paint shield of Claim 40 wherein at least a central portion of at least one of the paint shield elements is formed from material that permits light from the fixture to pass therethrough.

47. The paint shield of Claim 40 wherein at least one of the paint shield elements is formed at least in part from thin, relatively stiff stock selected from a group of materials that includes cardboard, fiberboard, chipboard and plastic.

48. The paint shield of Claim 40 wherein at least one of the paint shield elements has a central region formed from material that permits light from the fixture to pass through the installed array of paint

shield elements, and a perimeter region that surrounds the central region formed from thin, relatively stiff stock selected from a group of materials that includes cardboard, fiberboard, chipboard and plastic.